

STAND DOWN 2010

CONOPS

I. Objective: The objective of Stand Down 2010 is to call attention to the recent rise in Air Force suicides, the tragic loss of Airmen to private motor vehicle accidents, and to reenergize the Wingman concept as the foundation approach to suicide prevention and unit safety. Stand Down 2010 is designed to encourage Wingmen to be vigilant of these and other dangers by devoting time for structured unit discussion of these important topics. Leading the Stand Down are commanders and their subordinate leaders who are best positioned to meet the needs of their units and to lead small group discussion amongst Airmen who work together.

II. Central Message:

- A. Stand Down 2010 offers a pause in the day-to-day mission focus of Airmen (AD, ANG, AFRS, Civilians) in order to focus on the rise in Air Force suicides, reinvigorate the Wingman concept, and examine the loss of Airmen to private motor vehicle mishaps.
- B. We must be vigilant for killers both in and out of combat, including suicide and private motor vehicle mishaps. Air Force Wingmen look out for each other, and have the personal strength to confront Wingman in trouble and to make responsible decisions that keep each other safe and healthy.
- C. The Wingman concept is more than an event; it is a culture of Airmen taking care of Airmen 24/7, 365 days a year.
- D. PMV mishaps are the biggest cause of preventable deaths for our Airmen, and yet with effective Risk Management (RM), use of personal protective equipment (PPE) and reduction in reckless behavior the number of PMV mishaps and loss of life/serious injury could be greatly reduced.
- E. Stand Down 2010 activities should emphasize awareness, accountability, team building, communication, and interaction, not one-sided lectures.

III. General Format/Schedule:

- A. The highlight of Stand Down 2010 is the use of the Message Home video/guided discussion, and small group discussions amongst co-workers that will encourage Airmen to strengthen the Wingman concept help Airmen make better choices that will reduce the number of PMV mishaps and suicides affecting our force. As this day is not intended to be a burdensome, time and resources should be devoted primarily to these small group discussions.
- B. Begin the day with the unit commander making opening comments about suicide, PMV mishaps and the importance of the Wingman concept in reducing both.
- C. Following the commander's opening comments the unit should break up into workplace level groups and view the Message Home video, led by a discussion leader who will use the Message Home Guide (Attachment 1) to facilitate discussion (total time for the video and discussion should be approximately one hour). **THE VIDEO MAY BE DOWNLOADED FROM THE AF SUICIDE PREVENTION WEBSITE AT:**

<http://afspp.afms.mil>. Group leaders should preview the video and guide prior to leading the group in order to more effectively lead the discussion.

- D. After a short break continue in small group discussion with a focus on the Wingman concept. The discussion should include a review of the Wingman concept, followed by a scenario driven discussion that applies the Wingman philosophy to common situations faced by Airmen (total time for this segment should be approximately one hour). **See Attachment 2 for Scenarios**
- E. After a short break the groups should reconvene and watch the Stand Down PMV videos (A2AFlinchbaugh_V3 and British Army Sport Bike Safety video) at: <http://afspp.afms.mil>. Afterwards the group should begin a review of basic RM concepts, reckless behavior and consequences. Following that review, the group facilitator should use the two PMV scenarios along with the facilitator guide and talking points. **See Attachment 3 for Safety Scenarios**
- F. After completing these small group discussions each attendee will be issued a Wingman card and will identify their Wingman.
- G. After completing the discussions and issuing Wingman cards, the unit should reconvene for final comments by the commander. Those comments should include a re-emphasis on the importance of the Wingman concept, encouragement for members to seek help from fellow Wingman if needed, emphasis on the idea that seeking help is a sign of strength, encourage the use of the ACE concept (Ask, Care, Escort) and review base service available to help such as the Chapel, Mental Health, and Airmen and Family Readiness Center.

IV. Specific Outline of Events:

A. Unit CC Opening Comments:

- a. Review the central messages as outlined above
- b. Discuss your support and understanding of the Wingman Concept
- c. Reinforce that everyone needs help from time to time and your expectation that unit members seek that help from their Wingmen and from professionals when necessary
- d. Emphasize that seeking help during problems is a sign of strength
- e. Ask who in the unit knows someone who has killed themselves or died in a car accident
- f. Set the expectations for the Stand-Down 2010 participation
- g. Introduce the Message Home video

B. Message Home discussion:

- a. Workplace discussion leaders should use the Message Home guide (Attachment 1) to facilitate discussion about the video. The video may be downloaded from the AF Suicide Prevention website: <http://afspp.afms.mil>. Group leaders should preview the video and guide prior to leading the group in order to more effectively lead the discussion.

- b. Talk about how the signs of distress in the video might be displayed in your career field
- c. Review the warning signs of distress:
 - Unusual or sudden changes in behavior
 - Decreased work performance
 - Disciplinary problems
 - Financial troubles
 - Accidents and injuries
 - Relationship difficulties at work and at home
 - Spouse and/or child abuse
 - Alcohol or drug misuse
 - Social isolation
 - Moodiness, irritability, depression, feelings of hopelessness, or suicidal ideation
- d. Review the ACE model for intervening with those at risk
 - Ask your Wingman
 - About the warning signs of distress
 - Ask directly “Are you having thoughts of killing yourself?”
 - Care for your Wingman
 - Calmly control the situation
 - Carefully listen to show understanding
 - Remove any items that could be used for self injury
 - Escort your Wingman
 - Never leave your Wingman alone
 - Escort to someone who can help – chain of command, mental health, chaplain, medical provider
 - Call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline, 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) Press to speak to a veteran/military counselor

C. Wingman Concept Basics:

- a. Wingmen operate as a pair...watching each other's backs
- b. This is part of our unique Air Force flying culture
- c. This culture means we take responsibility for each other
- d. Taking responsibility means being alert to other Airmen in distress and acting when they need help
- e. This culture means seeking help from your Wingman when needed
- f. The Wingman concept impacts a wide range of Air Force issues:
 - Effective suicide prevention
 - Effective sexual assault response and prevention
 - Effective domestic violence intervention and prevention
 - Effective financial management
 - Responsible decision-making and behavior in all phases of our lives

- g. Wingmen stay with an Airman in crisis until they can ensure a safe hand-off to a supervisor or other competent individual

D. Private Motor Vehicle Mishaps (PMVM)

- a. Discussion leaders should show the Stand Down PMV videos at: <http://afspp.afms.mil> to begin discussion on motor vehicle safety, reckless behaviors and the consequences to the individual, their family and their unit.
- b. PMV MISHAPSs accounted for 47 deaths last year, 70% of the mishaps were the result of reckless behavior
- c. The common reasons for PMV mishaps include:
 - Reckless Behavior
 - Extreme vehicle maneuvers
 - Excessive speed
 - Alcohol
 - Lack of personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - Fatigue
 - Inattentiveness (texting, phone calls, etc...)
- d. RM Basics:
 - Identify the hazard
 - Assess the risk
 - Analyze risk control measures
 - Make control decisions
 - Implement risk controls
 - Evaluate risk control effectiveness
- e. Common PPE
 - Motorcycle helmet
 - Reflective vest
 - Steel toed shoes
 - Goggles/sun glasses
 - Gloves/leathers
 - Seatbelts/car seats

E. Issuing Wingman Cards

- a. Ensure every participant gets a card
- b. Ensure everyone identifies someone willing to serve as their Wingman
- c. Identify, prior to the session, individuals willing to serve as Wingman those who may not be able to easily identify one on their own

F. Unit CC Closing Comments

- a. Review the day's events
- b. Reinforce that unit members must carry these lessons with them to be successful

- c. Encourage everyone to be the best possible Wingman

V. Final Recommendations:

- A. Maintain unit-level focus and emphasize use of small group discussion
- B. Focus on interaction, communication, and team building
- C. Provide adequate lead time for scheduling and planning
- D. Use this CONOPS as unit-level implementation guidance
- E. Encourage civilian participation

MESSAGE HOME DISCUSSION GUIDE

Introduction

Suicide is currently the second leading cause of death in the AF, with 41 Airmen, 23 Guardsmen and Reservists and 20 Civilians, having made the decision to end their own life in 2009 alone. Even one suicide is too many for those who are impacted by it. Suicide is not just a loss for that individual; it affects families, squadrons and the entire base community. No one wants to be left wondering if they could have made a difference in saving a life. To prevent such tragedies we should all be good wingmen in looking out for our co-workers and engaging when we see others who may be at-risk. We must be “All In” to prevent suicide in our communities, and engage with those who may be at risk by asking directly about suicide and taking appropriate actions to keep our wingmen safe.

After downloading the files from the AF Suicide Prevention Website to your computer or cd, click on the “Message Home” icon to start the program. Before showing this to your unit this it will be helpful to watch the video yourself with this discussion guide, so that you will have time to plan how to translate the lessons from this program to your duty section. This guide is designed to help commanders and supervisors use the “Message Home” video as an education tool to help foster an awareness of suicide risk factors and appropriate interventions. The video is led by a narrator who helps set the stage for the scenario and poses questions about risk factors seen in the video and offers options for how a good wingman should respond to warning signs observed. Your role as a discussion leader is to help translate the lessons seen in the video to conditions in your AFSC, duty section and base. This guide will identify questions and comments you can make at different points throughout the video to make it more relevant to your group.

This video tells the story of an at-risk Airman named Charlie Stevens. Airmen Stevens is a Security Forces member who had been having a very successful career. Following a deployment and a PCS, Airmen Stevens is not coping well with life and the stress is starting to show at work and at home. He uses computer chatting to stay in touch with his girlfriend and tries to hide the problems that he is having from her. Some of the warning signs exhibited by Amn Stevens in the video may be unique to the Security Forces career field. As you show this video to your unit, encourage them to not just look at the risk factors seen in this video, but also how similar levels of distress might be displayed in your AFSC or duty section. While we do not all handle weapons on a daily basis, the carelessness shown by Airmen Stevens could create hazards in any AF work place.

The Video

After an introduction by the narrator, video shows several scenes of Airman Stevens both at home and at work showing signs of distress in his interactions with others. The Narrator poses the following question.

What warning signs are most obvious in Charlie’s interaction with his Sergeant?

- A. diminished work performance
- B. lack of attention to his overall dress and appearance
- C. complete lack of focus on tasks
- D. all of the above

The correct answer is D. You should stop and allow your group to discuss this question, asking them what they saw that led them to that answer. Before clicking the answer to continue, you should also ask your group the following questions.

Why would Airmen Stevens only communicate with his girlfriend over the computer, rather than on the phone?

Answers may include that texting and online chatting are easier, or more convenient. You should also highlight that it can be easy to hide or control your true emotions over a computer than it is over the phone or in person. Unwillingness to talk to someone directly may be a cause for concern. In some cases the lack of personal contact on-line may make it easier for someone to share their feelings or thoughts of suicide. For this reason, text messages or on-line postings suggesting thoughts of suicide should not be ignored and should be addressed as soon as possible.

What opportunities to intervene with Airman Stevens were missed in this scenario?

Airmen Steven's supervisor identifies his poor performance and aggressively corrects this but does not take the opportunity to try to understand the apparent change in Airman Steven's performance. Airman Stevens friend covers for him at the firing range, but does not follow-up to get to the bottom of the problem.

How might the type of distress Airman Stevens is feeling be seen in our work section, and what problems could these cause?

Some signs such as changes in appearance are common across career fields, how could carelessness, distraction, and fatigue be problems in your section

The Narrator poses another question.

At the firing range, Charlie is careless with a loaded weapon and fails to clear a round from the chamber. In the discussion with Will that follows, several warning signs are apparent.

Those signs include:

- A. Agitation
- B. Loss of focus on work
- C. Anger
- D. Irritability
- E. All of the above

Again all of the above is the correct answer. All of these can be signs of distress and potential warning signs for suicide. You may discuss that these signs may be common at low levels and the importance of learning ways to manage stress before it becomes a problem. You may discuss the importance of seeking help from a friend or professional if you have difficulty managing problems on your own. Emphasize that everyone needs help with something, cars repairs, managing your money, studying for promotion, or managing a particular stress. If you are comfortable you may share a story of a time when you were distressed and did not manage it in a positive way and how you recovered from that situation.

The video continues and we see more warning signs from Airmen Stevens. His girlfriend sees a disturbing message on-line and needs to decide what to do. The narrator will ask:

Annie suspects that something is wrong with Charlie. She's concerned based on the tone of his email, Charlie's difficulty with his last deployment, and the problems they've been having in their relationship. How should Annie proceed?

- A. Wait to see if Charlie sounds better the next time she hears from him.
- B. Immediately take action and contact someone that is stationed with Charlie to see how he's doing.

Discuss with your group what they would do and why. Why would they choose to wait in this situation? What could happen if they wait? What would keep them from contacting someone to

check on Charlie? Participants may feel that his message is not alarming enough to be convinced he might kill himself. Reinforce the idea that it would be easy to prevent suicide if everyone thinking of ending their life clearly stated “I’m going to kill myself this evening”. Often their messages are more subtle, talking about being dead, or not being able to go on any more, or stating “no matter what happens remember that I love you”. These statements are an opening to “Ask” what is they mean to give them an opening to talk further.

We then see Annie contact Charlie’s friend Will, and we see that in some cases combining different perspectives on a problem can help to see it more clearly. Following this interaction Will is faced with a choice of whether to get involved or not.

The Narrator will ask:

Because Will is concerned about Charlie, yet does not want to invade his privacy, he decides that he has two options. Which of these options should Will chose?

- A. Take immediate action, and personally intervene with Charlie
- B. Wait to see what happens, and hope that Charlie gets better

Discuss with your group the reasons for taking either action. These may be similar to the discussion regarding Annie’s decision but may be more focused on concerns about what to say or how to approach Charlie. Encourage the group to see that going to check on someone in distress or even someone at risk and simply spending time and showing concern are the first responses of a good wingman. If we don’t check we won’t know for sure if there is a problem. Use examples from your section of things you check, or validate every time even when things are almost always okay. We check toolkits to make sure tools have not been left where they could damage an aircraft, we double check medications to prevent adverse reactions, and we should always check on our wingmen if there is any reason to be concerned for their safety. After Will decides to check on Charlie the Narrator reviews helpful techniques for approaching someone who may be risk for suicide and asks:

In his discussion with Charlie, which of the suggested approaches did Will use?

- A. Will was persistent
- B. Will offered to buy Charlie a drink so that he could speak more freely
- C. Will expressed sincere concern to Charlie
- D. A and C

Of course the correct answer is D. Discuss the dangers of encouraging someone who is depressed or at risk of suicide to drink. Alcohol is a depressant and can increase someone’s thoughts of suicide. Additionally, alcohol reduces inhibitions, it makes people more likely to engage in risky behavior or make bad decisions including the decision to commit suicide.

The narrator then discusses the ACE model for **Ask, Care and Escort**

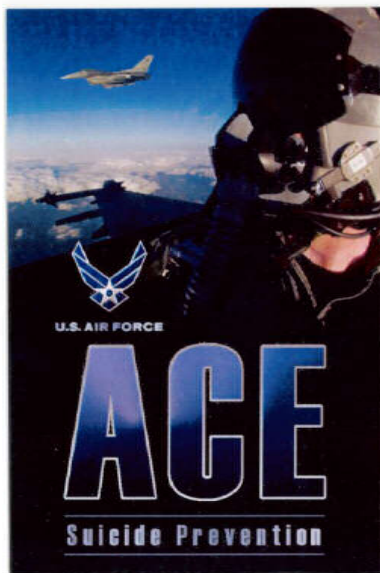
It’s important to **Ask** directly about thoughts of suicide, and to take all comments about suicidal thoughts very seriously. Although it can be awkward, it’s important to ask the tough questions about whether or not your buddy is thinking about hurting himself. If the answer is yes, or if you even suspect that the answer is yes, don’t leave him alone.

Care for your Wingman by calmly expressing concern. Be sure not to be judgmental or promise secrecy, since that may not be possible. Remove anything that he could use to hurt himself, and immediately seek help.

And finally, **Escort** him immediately to your chain of command, chaplain or primary care clinic. And remember, never leave him alone.

*****Emphasize here that only a commander can direct a military member to mental health. When in doubt engage your chain of command so they can help you decide how to take care of your wingman.*****

The final video segment shows the possible outcome if Annie and Will had not made the decision to reach out to Charlie. This is an outcome that no base, unit, section or family wants to experience. For any of these groups one suicide is too many, and it is up to everyone to look after their wingmen to try to prevent such a tragedy. You may want to discuss incidents at your base or that you have experienced in your career (or that members of your group have experienced), in which there has been a bad outcome, suicide, DUI, accident that could have been prevented if someone had stepped up to the responsibility of being a good wingman.



A **Ask your wingman**

- Have the courage to ask the question, but stay calm
- Ask the question directly: Are you thinking of killing yourself?

C **Care for your wingman**

- Calmly control the situation; do not use force; be safe
- Actively listen to show understanding and produce relief
- Remove any means that could be used for self-injury

E **Escort your wingman**

- Never leave your buddy alone
- Escort to chain of command, Chaplain, behavioral health professional, or primary care provider
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:
1-800-273-8255 (TALK)

USACHPPM
<http://chppm-www.apgea.army.mil/>

ATTACHMENT TWO

WINGMAN CONCEPT SCENARIOS

Scenario 1

SrA Davis was a 23 year old, white male with just over 5 years of active duty service. Following his training in Electrical Environmental systems he was assigned to base X and had been there for 4 years 10 months. SrA Davis completed FTAC and Airmen Leadership School. In the unit, he was known to have frequent arguments with peers and was not well liked. Overall, he was a loner and his argumentative nature made him an outcast in the unit.

After 3 years of marriage his wife left him with their daughter. Just prior to her leaving, he received a referral EPR for chronically being late for work. He deployed for 4 months shortly after this time (not in the Middle East AOR). Prior to leaving for the deployment, his wife and he talked of reconciliation. After returning from the deployment, he had a personality conflict with an NCO and was 'disciplined' for insubordination. Within a week, he gambled away \$3000 that he had planned to use for travel with his wife. When his wife discovered he gambled away the money, she decided not to reunite with him. During the time that SrA Davis and his wife were together, he had threatened to take his life several times, but his wife did not take him seriously. He again told his wife he could not live without her.

SrA Davis had few close friends, but he told one of them on two occasions that he wanted to take his life. His friend knew that SrA Davis's drinking and gambling was getting out of control. Within a month of his wife deciding not to reconcile, he did not show for work. He had told squadron members he would be on leave, but this was not true. In the early evening the First Sergeant became concerned and contacted the local police. The First Sergeant and police went to the member's apartment and found he had taken his life by hanging.

Questions:

What do you think about this case?

- 1) Have you seen or dealt with similar circumstances in your career?
 - How did the leadership deal with it?
 - Were there any bad outcomes?
 - What would you have done differently in those prior cases?
- 2) What factors do you see that may place this person at 'risk' for trouble?
 - ANSWER: Disciplinary issue; late for work; recent divorce; isolation; growing gambling/finance issue; increased drinking.
- 3) How does the Wingman concept fit into this scenario?
- 4) If the friend told leadership about what he knew, would it have made a difference?

Scenario 2

Mr. Jones is a 42-year-old, male with 18 years of government service. He's worked as a contract specialist for various units on his base. He has been with his current unit for the past eight years, and enjoys occasionally socializing with his fellow co-workers. He is well liked by his staff, and does very good work.

Mr. Jones has always enjoyed social drinking. As a college student he was known to become heavily intoxicated at parties and struggled at times with class attendance due to hangovers. Once he was employed by the Air Force he moderated his drinking, and for years had no problems with alcohol. However, in the past three years he was promoted to a position that was very demanding. His workload was heavy, and he was a supervisor for a large staff. In the past six months he had to discipline and eventually fire one of his staff, which caused increased tension in the workplace. He found himself stopping by the local sports bar on the way home most nights to "have a few" and try to relax. Three months ago, he was pulled over for a DUI after crossing the center line on the drive home from the bar. He was embarrassed about the DUI, and tried to keep it hidden. However, the incident was published in the local paper, so other employees knew.

The stress at work has also been causing problems at home. Co-workers have overheard him arguing on the phone with his wife. Mr. Jones confided to one co-worker that "my marriage may be near the end." Others notice his family never stops by the workplace like they use to.

Several co-workers have thought they may have smelled alcohol on his breath during meetings, but no one is sure. At a recent meeting Mr. Jones became angry and loudly yelled at a staff member in front of others, something he had never done before. Staff like Mr. Jones, and don't want to do anything to harm his career, but they are becoming increasingly concerned about him.

Questions:

- 1) What do you think about this case?
- 2) Have you seen similar circumstances in your career?
 - How did the leadership deal with it?
 - Were there any bad outcomes?
 - What would you have done differently in those prior cases?
 - What resources are available for civilians?
- 3) How does the Wingman concept come into play in this scenario?

Scenario 3

During an argument over finances, MSgt Corley pushed his wife downstairs. She was treated at the local hospital for broken ribs and bruises. MSgt Corley was arrested, convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence by the civilian courts for physically assaulting his wife and was

placed on one year's probation. He was also ordered to attend a 26 week Domestic Violence Intervention Class, held in the civilian community.

While investigating the incident, the following was learned. The neighbors had heard numerous loud arguments but had been reluctant to say anything to the active duty member or his spouse. The couple has two children, ages 9 and 11, who were having increasing difficulty at school. MSgt Corley was not getting along with a new supervisor. Several unit members had complained to the supervisor about MSgt Corley's quick tendency to get angry.

Questions:

- 1) What are the red flags?
 - Relationship conflicts between spouses
 - Prior incidents reported
 - School issues
 - Mission complications
 - Anger at work
 - Other considerations?
- 2) What other underlying problems can you identify?
 - Parenting issue
 - Emotional abuse of children; impact of domestic violence
 - Financial issues
 - Other Considerations (attendee responses)
- 4) How could the Wingman Concept have affected this situation?

ATTACHMENT THREE MOTOR VEHICLE ACCIDENT SCENARIOS

Scenario 1 PMV-4

SSgt Jones, a 22 year old Combat Controller, was home on emergency leave due to the death of his stepmother. With minimal sleep since arriving home, SSgt Jones attended the funeral on Thursday and ran errands on Friday and Saturday morning. On Saturday afternoon the Sergeant attended a family gathering at his sister's house. He stayed at his sister house for approximately four hours where he ate sparingly and drank "a few" beers. He then left with friends to go to a mall and a restaurant where he ate again and drank a few more beers. He and his friends returned to one of the friend's apartment to change cloths so they could go to the club. At about 2330 they went to the club where SSgt Jones drank another "two or three beers" before leaving at 0215. Even though they were in one of the friend's car, at sometime during the night SSgt Jones became the driver. While driving home from the night club the sergeant and his friends became involved in a heated conversation. At one point SSgt Jones turned around to talk to his friends in the back seat. The vehicle veered to the right and began to swerve back and forth when the sergeant tried to regain control. The car left the road and entered a deep drainage ditch. The car then rotated clockwise through the ditch until it hit an embankment causing it to overturn. As the car overturned SSgt Jones was partially ejected out the driver's side window where he sustained a severe head trauma. The car was exceeding the speed limit when it began to swerve. The sergeant was not wearing his seat belt and had a BAC of 0.07 at the time of the mishap.

Questions:

1. Identify the contributing factors and reckless behavior leading to this mishap.
2. Why do Airmen engage in reckless behavior?
3. What is the effect of this mishap on his unit, and if the accident is found to be the result of his misconduct, what effect would that have on himself and his family?
4. What could he or his friends (Wingmen) have done to prevent this mishap?
5. What is the single most significant negative driving habit you have, that if you change, would significantly reduce your risk of a motor vehicle crash?

Scenario 1: PMV-4 Facilitator Guide & Talking Points

(Facilitator Use Only)

Open-ended questions and inter-group discussion is encouraged, but the following points will help ensure that major themes are covered: identifying reckless behavior and other contributing factors to mishaps, understanding what leads to reckless behavior, being aware of the consequences of poor decision-making, and our responsibility as Wingmen.

Question 1 Main Theme: Identifying and Addressing Reckless Behavior and other Contributing Factors to Mishaps

- Identify Contributing Factors:
 - Funeral Related: depression, sadness, grief, stress
 - Partying with old friends / Fatigue: Lack of sleep
- Identify Reckless Behavior:
 - Excessive drinking / Distracted driving
 - Failure to adhere to safe driving practices - speeding, not wearing seat belt

Question 2 Main Theme: Why Do Airmen Engage in Reckless Behavior?

- Limited life experiences leading to poor decision making
- Pushing endurance limits while attempting to maximize time off / fatigue
- Peer influence
- Underestimation of effects of alcohol on reflexes and judgment

Question 3 Main Theme: Poor Decisions Have Consequences – to Self, Unit and Family

- Airman: Physical injury (perhaps debilitating), loss of Air Force affiliation and career, loss of future earnings based on nature of disability
- Family: If his mishap was determined to be caused by his misconduct, it is possible that the finding would be Line of Duty “No” and he and his family could be denied benefits they may have been entitled to from the AF under a medical discharge or through the Veterans Administration
- Unit: Loss of critical skill-set, degraded readiness ratings, affect on unit morale

Question 4 Main Theme: Wingmen Should Intervene and Stop Reckless Behavior

- Curb excessive drinking
- Identify and stop unsafe behaviors – Supervisors especially must enforce standards
- Employ alternative transportation (designated driver, taxi, Base programs)

Question 5 Main Theme: Airmen are Responsible for Identifying and Correcting their Own Reckless Behavior – Before it is Too Late

Scenario 2

PMV-2

Senior Airman Thomas bought a Harley Davidson Road Glide (1584cc) from a friend. The airman had a valid driver's license but no motorcycle endorsement. SrA Thomas lived at the same apartment complex as his First Sergeant and had to show him his new toy. Upon seeing the motorcycle the First Sergeant told the Airman that he thought the bike may be too big for him and he would have trouble controlling it. A couple of days later, on the day of the mishap, the First Sergeant saw SrA Thomas at the apartment exit gate wearing only a t-shirt, shorts and tennis shoes and having trouble tripping the gate sensor. The Airman asked the First Sergeant to trip the gate because he could not back the bike up because of the weight. The First Sergeant asked Airman Thomas where his helmet was and had he completed the required motorcycle safety course as he tripped the gate. As SrA Thomas pulled away he said "Harley riders don't wear helmets, and I'll sign up for the next class." He wobbled and had trouble controlling the motorcycle as he pulled away. SrA Thomas met a friend (co-worker) and they took their bikes for a ride along a lakefront road. Road conditions were wet due to a rainstorm a few hours before. The speed limit on the road is 45mph with several winding turns that are popular with the local riders. As SrA Thomas approached a sharp turn with a posted speed limit of 25 mph he sped up to 60 mph and passed his friend. SrA Thomas failed to negotiate the curve, hit the right hand shoulder and lost control. The bike went airborne and SrA Thomas was ejected head over heels into a large tree, resulting in fatal injuries.

Questions:

1. Identify the contributing factors and reckless behavior leading to this mishap.
2. In the contributing factor identified, why was that person acting that way?
3. If the accident is found to be a consequence of the Airman's misconduct (not in a Line of Duty), what effect will that have on himself, his unit and his family?
4. What actions, if any, did his Wingman (first sergeant, commander and friends) make or fail to make that resulted in this mishap?
5. What are other examples of fatigue, reckless behavior or inattentiveness that you have observed either in your own case or with other drivers?

Scenario 2: PMV-2 Facilitator Guide & Talking Points

(Facilitator Use Only)

Open-ended questions and inter-group discussion is encouraged, but the following points will help ensure that major themes are covered: identifying reckless behavior and other contributing factors to mishaps, understanding what leads to reckless behavior, being aware of the consequences of poor decision-making, and our responsibility as Wingmen.

Question 1 Main Theme: Identifying and Addressing Reckless Behavior and other Contributing Factors to Mishaps

- Contributing Factors:
 - Size of motorcycle exceeded Airman's capacity to adequately control
 - Lack of training & inexperience
- Reckless Behavior:
 - Lack of personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - Speeding / "Showing Off"

Question 2 Main Theme: Why Do Airmen Engage in Reckless Behavior?

- Lack of understanding of the importance of PPE
- Lack of understanding the importance of adequate training
- Underestimation of hazards and overestimation of ability
- Failure to give adequate weight to the concerns and warnings of others

Question 3 Main Theme: Poor Decisions Have Consequences – to Self, Unit and Family

- Airman: Physical injury (perhaps debilitating), loss of Air Force affiliation and career, Loss of future earnings based on nature of disability
- Family: If his mishap was caused by his misconduct, it is possible that the finding would be Line of Duty "No" and he and his family could be denied benefits they may have been entitled to from the AF under a medical discharge or the Veterans Administration
- Unit: Loss of critical skill-set, degraded readiness ratings, affect on unit morale

Question 4 Main Theme: Wingmen Should Intervene and Stop Reckless Behavior

- This discussion should focus on the responsibility of the First Sergeant and his friends (Wingmen) in breaking the chain of events leading to the tragedy
- Consider the special role of supervisors and commanders in enforcing standards and rules of behavior on AND off duty

Questions 5 Main Theme: Airmen are Responsible for Identifying and Correcting their Own Reckless Behavior – Before it is Too Late

**ATTACHMENT FOUR
WINGMAN CARD**

AIR FORCE WINGMAN

My Wingman is _____



INTEGRITY – SERVICE - EXCELLENCE